

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 01292 130723Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-08 COME-00
TRSE-00 OMB-01 INT-05 OES-07 /041 W
-----004018 130727Z /15
R 130700Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8029

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1292

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EMIN, TH
SUBJECT: URANIUM IN THAILAND

REF: 77 BANGKOK 18156

1. DURING MY JANUARY 12 MEETING WITH MINISTER OF INDUSTRY KASEM WE TOUCHED ON THE INTEREST OF AMERICAN COMPANIES IN OBTAINING CONCESSIONS TO EXPLORE FOR URANIUM IN NORTHEAST THAILAND. AS THE DEPARTMENT KNOWS, WYOMING MINERALS (A SUBSIDIARY OF WESTINGHOUSE) AND CRUX INTERNATIONAL, WITH HEAD-QUARTERS IN DENVER, HAVE MADE PRELIMINARY SURVEYS AND ARE ANXIOUS TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER WHAT APPEAR TO BE HIGHLY PROMISING DEPOSITS. WE UNDERSTAND COMPANIES HAVE SUBMITTED FORMAL PROPOSALS TO THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY.

2. KASEM CONFIDED HE HAD BEEN DISCUSSING POSSIBLE CONCESSIONS WITH PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK. URANIUM IS A DELICATE PROBLEM BECAUSE "ANTI-IMPERIALISTS" (CLEARLY A REFERENCE TO THE SRV) MIGHT QUICKLY TURN ANY EXPLOITATION OF URANIUM TO THEIR OWN PROPAGANDA ENDS. NOETHELESS, THE RTG MIGHT WELL CONSIDER GOING AHEAD WITH THE GRANTING OF CONCESSIONS IF THE TERMS WERE RIGHT. THE AMERICAN COMPANIES WANT CONCESSIONS FOR HUGE AREAS (THE WHOLE NORTHEAST). THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE TO THE RTG. IF THE AREA OF EXPLORATION COULD BE NARROWED, SOMETHING MIGHT BE WORKED OUT.
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3. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROBE TO DETERMINE THE STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE MEANTIME IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH OTHER INTERESTED USG AGENCIES AND THE COMPANIES CONCERNED. ANY GUIDANCE ON HOW WE MIGHT PROCEED TO ASSIST THE COMPANIES WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: URANIUM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BANGKO01292
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780019-1116
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780168/aaaacfoh.tel
Line Count: 63
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9634fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BANGKOK 18156
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3782035
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: URANIUM IN THAILAND
TAGS: EMIN, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9634fce3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014